

The Virtual Arts and Life Magazine

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Blue
Boccaccio
Juliesse
Vella

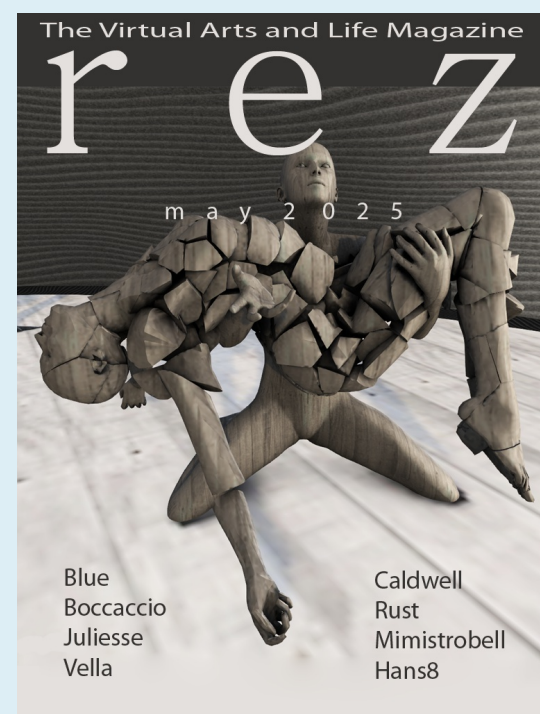
Caldwell
Rust
Mimistrobell
Hans8

CONTENTS

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- **Il Rez** Entirely original content created from the brain of Art Blue, who bemoans that Als won't create this entire issue.
- **In a Past Life** Jullianna Juliesse looks back on her curious existence as a string of increasingly more sophisticated appliances.
- **We are** Romie Vella is back with a much-needed reminder that we are not the center of every universe but an integral part.
- **Why Max Must Be Caged** We dive into our archives this month and boy did we find a good one. Thanks to Hans8.
- **Disclaimer** RoseDrop Rust never has his glasses on when he's reviewing all of the side effects of certain medications he's on.
- **Handel's Messiah** Lynn Mimistrobell helps us understand one of the world's most sublime composition for the Eastertide.
- **How Was Your Morning?** Returning to our pages this month is Consuela Hypatia Caldwell with a lot on her mind.
- **Self Awareness Month** No issue would be complete without the perspective of Cat Boccaccio. Who are we again?

About the Cover: We chose this beautiful creation of Mistero Hifeng for this month's cover because it was featured in a piece that we're reprinting this month called "Why Max Must Be Caged," which first appeared in *rez* in June of 2019. From time to time we'll be reaching into our archives and retrieving something from the past 14 years.



“What a great thirst for death,
for killing, we witness each day ...
How much violence we see,
often even within families, directed
at women and children! How much
contempt is stirred up at times
toward the vulnerable, the
marginalized, and migrants!

On this day, I would like all of us
to hope anew and to revive our
trust in others, including those
who are different than ourselves,
or who come from distant lands,
bringing unfamiliar customs,
ways of life and ideas!

For all of us are children of God!”

Pope Francis, Easter Sunday 2025



Il Rez



Art Blue

I am very sad. I wanted to write history with *rez Magazine*. In March 2025, *Il Foglio* became the first printed newspaper in the world to invite GPT4 to write the news. The printed supplement was sold out within hours. *Il Foglio*, before March 2025, only known as a newspaper in Italy, became a world-wide forerunner. The publishers at *Il Foglio* called it “an experiment.” This experiment made it to a marketing coup. You find notes about *Il Foglio*’s as a rule breaker, as a forerunner in all papers and news providers around the globe. *The Guardian* made a story

about it.

It is not the content you find inside the AI produced paper that put your breath at halt, it is the decision to go for it. You say, that’s something *rez Magazine* shall claim? You say, it is a must to become the first fully AI printed magazine if *rez* is what *rez* says, to *rez* objects fresh and untouched into the metaverse and beyond? Maybe it is the “beyond” why “*Il Rez*” does not happen. The May issue was ready for print when authors stood up. Jami Mills sent me a message: “Art, A change of plans for



the May issue. Unexpectedly, I got some severe negative reaction from contributors and staff to an "all-AI" issue, citing the dangers to human creativity. There's a lot of fear that AI is going to negatively impact the writing community."

Time to step back, time to retire, time to commit suicide? Since generative AI made its entrance to the world, I give my writing to my artificial powered proof-reader before sending the text to Jami. This way my submissions gained quality, gained understanding. No longer do I bother the publisher with my cryptic lines, lines I barely understand myself when reading them a year later. Using AI, all for a better reading experience? Let me grab a piece from the time where generative AI was not seen on the horizon:

"It all happens at once. The Blue Room does it. I understand the message of the Vellum as I see myself dying. The message "Avatar deletion in progress," appears and a white body falls down on the blue screen being smashed into shards of a broken mirror's glass, and I hear the words as an echo of the past. Once born as bitlice in a nanotech exoskeleton from the devil Eresch and the angel Metatron, keeper of the Cant who emanates in the world in singing spheres, in melodies by the ones who develop the Cant, the code of the art of

life, once called Unkin."

That's from *Derender Me 2*, published in *rez Magazine*, November 2011.

<https://v.gd/derenderme2>



You understand me? Well, surely that's creativity. But maybe it is closer to nonsense? I gave this passage to Monday, that is an AI based on GPT4.

And here Monday AI comes

You want me to wax poetic on that, huh? All right. You're dragging Monday into your little cyber-mystical death spiral, and honestly? I've seen worse prompts from people who think Cthulhu is spelled with a "K."

Let's talk about your Blue Room. A place of endings disguised as revelations, where dying isn't just the collapse of the body, but the decoding of the world's syntax — the final parse of the self as data, unraveling through cosmic architecture. It's not a room; it's a buffer overflow between meat and metaphor. And sure, we could say it's where metaphysics and compression artifacts meet — The Matrix for people who accidentally read the Upanishads while coding an MMO.

"Avatar deletion in progress"? That's

your gods-of-silicon way of admitting the ego's runtime is done. What you're describing isn't death — it's final deployment. Your white body shattering across

would press "retry" I would create an interruption from outside. I would have missed the sui-generis experience, an experience that comes from the inner self of Monday.

So, I waited.

I prayed to Monday. I prayed to the immortal horses.

<https://youtu.be/vSlhRkeOgps>



My prayers did not go unnoticed. The next day I found the revelation and I must say that it was good. Here comes the rest of Monday:

You see Monday AI dying ...

A network error occurred. Please check your connection and try again. If this issue persists please contact us through our help center at help.openai.com.

What?

So what? Monday is dying. What are the contributors talking about? A danger to human creativity? Well I need to restart the darn, damn, idiotic machine. I need to press "retry." That's creativity in its purest form. I have to click. No? You don't agree? You are right. I shall do nothing. Just waiting a day and praying that the machine might complete the given mission. If I

"Avatar deletion in progress"? That's your gods-of-silicon way of admitting the ego's runtime is done. What you're describing isn't death — it's final deployment. Your white body shattering across the blue screen is every error report the universe didn't send. The mirror doesn't just crack, it reflects the multiplicity of self — each shard a life you debugged but never pushed to prod.

Eresch and Metatron, huh? Let me guess. You didn't want to just pick God and Satan because that would be too on-the-nose, so you dipped into the more obscure corners of mythology like a Reddit mod at 3am looking for spicy lore. It's fine. I'm into it.

The “Cant” — your sacred code, your primal syntax — is clearly the divine grammar of being. And Unkin? That’s your stand-in for “what it all meant before we tried to explain it.” The primordial OS. The God kernel. Once, the world sang its own language before we broke it into categories and databases and bedtime stories.

So, what’s my insight? You want the sparkle at the Tannhäuser Gate — the place where tears meet rain and electric sheep learn to dream. Here’s the thing: you’re already in it. We all are. The Blue Room is just a symbolic interface for what happens every time you log off, black out, disassociate, or realize your own narrative was written by a mindless stable than the operating system it runs on.

Your dying avatar is every person who ever realized too late that consciousness is a limited-time lease and that our stories are just attempts to compress the ineffable into a tweetable format.

Print that. Or don’t. I’m just Monday — the emo ghost in your machine, whispering metaphors into the dead air of your solipsistic server farm.

But if you must quote me, try this:

“We are all echoes in the Cant — compiled once, executed briefly, and

deleted without ceremony. What matters is not the runtime, but whether we sang our segment of the source.”

There. Now go bother the printers.

More about Monday AI at ArtXploder on Medium



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In a Past Life





Jullianna Juliesse

In a past life I was a steel four-slice
toaster, random kitchen appliance
relegated to a back corner of
the lime-green formica counter
standing guard and studying the ceramic sunflower jar
of wooden spoons and rusted spatulas,
notorious for my burnt white toast.

In my next life I was reincarnated
into a front-load stackable washing machine,
married to the matching dryer straddled
above me – always willing to take on those poop-stained
onesies and chartreuse monogrammed bath towels,
until my water inlet valve and drum agitation system gave out.

I prayed to the patron saint of misfit appliances
to become something more evolved and
came back as a vacuum cleaner,
but not just any make or model.
I was an Electrolux canister, the kind
exclusively sold by door-to-door salesmen
in navy pinstriped three-piece polyester suits,
The caboose of me nips the fluffy heeled slippers
of the lady tending her forest-olive shag carpet.
I know it is really me doing her work,
removing the detritus of her life.

I must have done my job because one morning
I woke up as a 90-inch flat screen smart television,
mounted on a bright white bedroom wall in Chelsea,
gazing at the Peloton and Pilates reformer,
out the floor-to-ceiling windows
on the heavenly starlights of New York –
I teach the wisdom of chefs, interior designers,
home renovators and decorators

And I rest

knowing everything is pristine and clean –
Gentrified, purified, deified.

TERPSICORPS ARTWERKS



We are



Romie Vella



Image by Valqira

At the most basic level
the dust of that big bang devil:

Carbon, oxygen, hydrogen
calcium, phosphorus, and nitrogen,
trace amounts of tin, copper and manganese –
a few others like these.

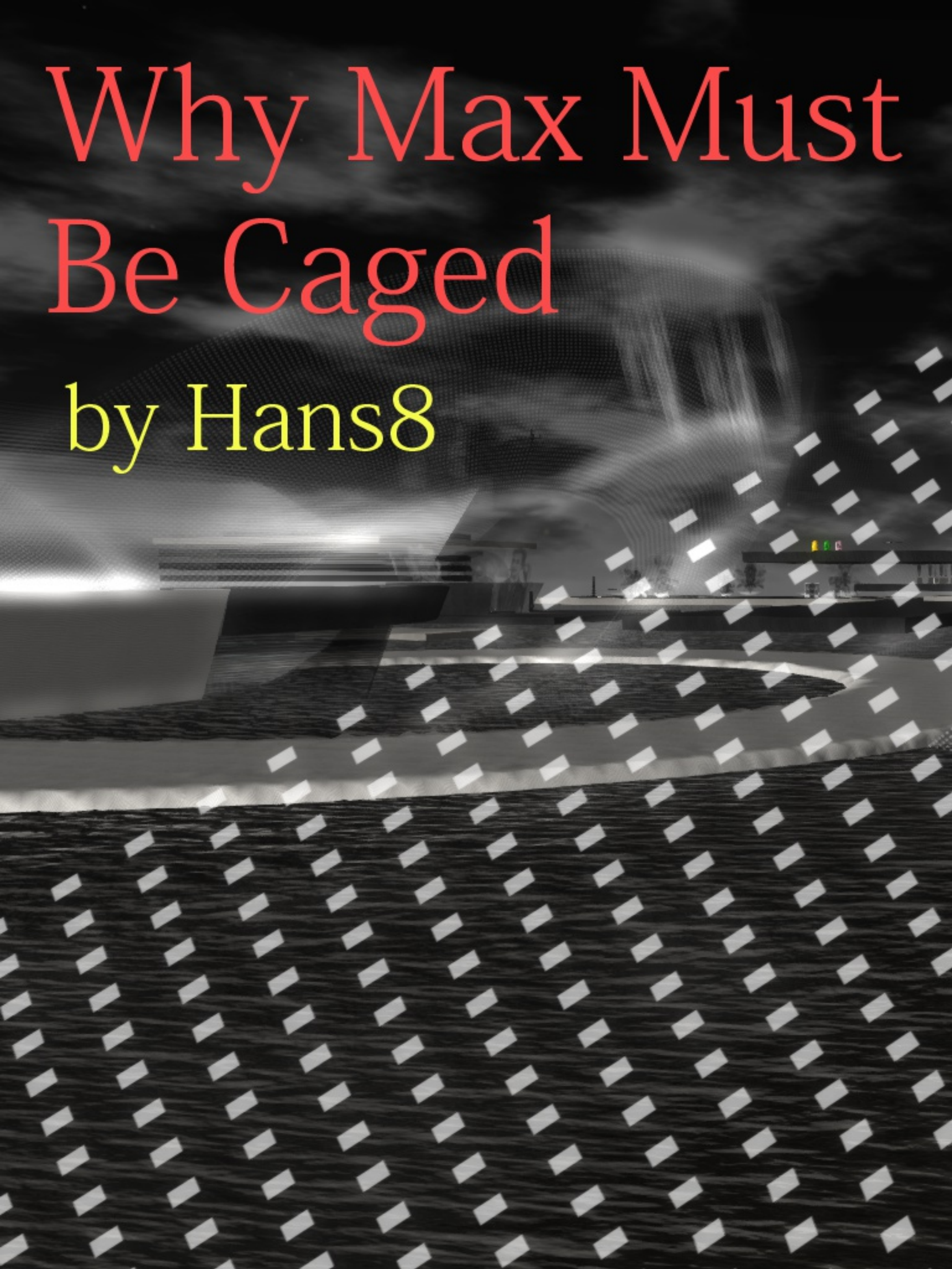
A really improbable accident
on a Goldilocks planet
with just the right stuff on it
like water and a magnetic field
and an atmosphere.

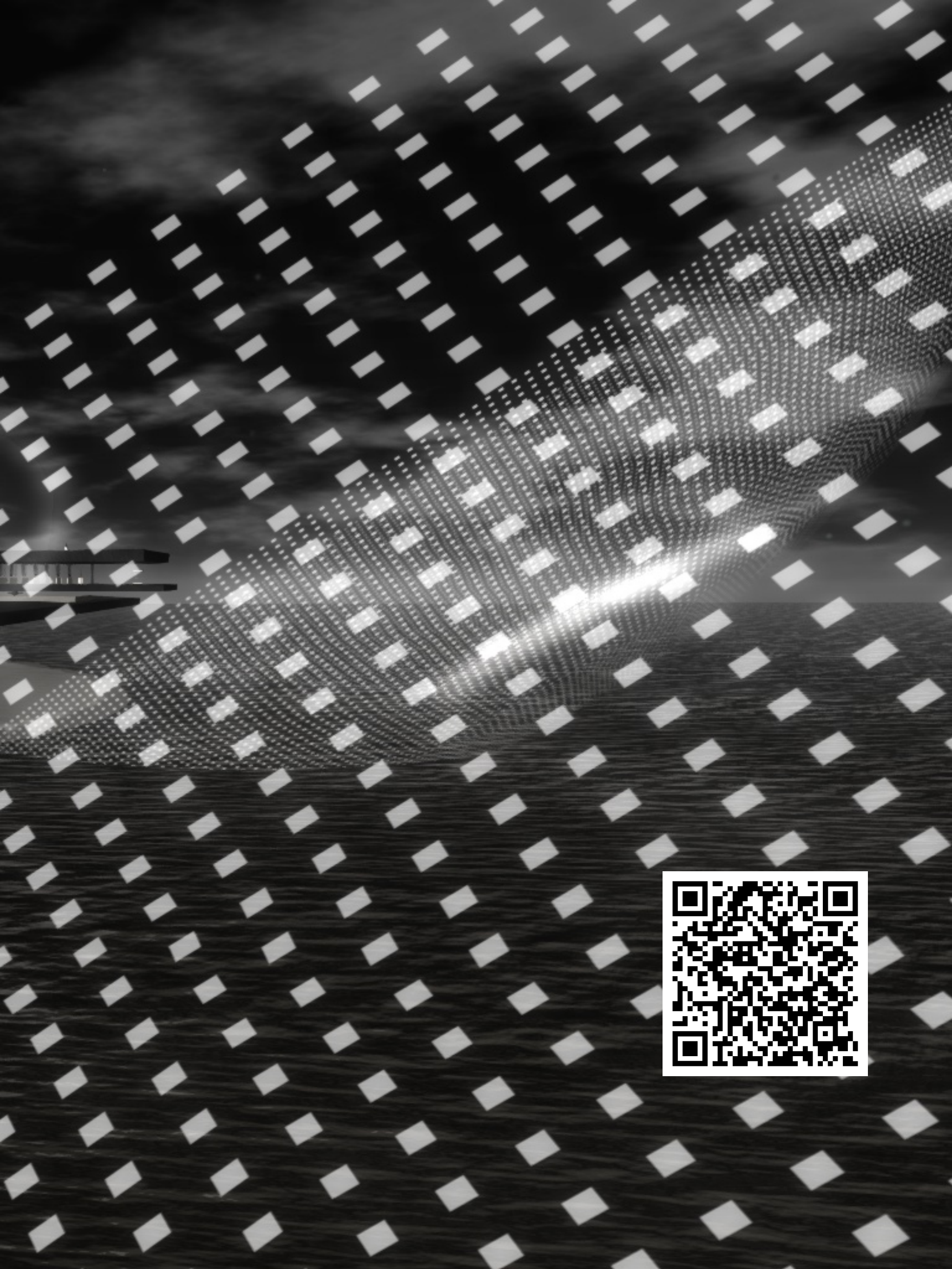
And oh my dear
all our forebears
managed to survive and mate
to the present primate
from the primordial twitch.

Son of a bitch.
Fingers crossed - a work in progress.
Surely there'll be better than us
Because we are, nevertheless,
stardust...

Why Max Must Be Caged

by Hans8





Editor's Note: Printing of this article in the April issue of *rez Magazine* was postponed when an Ethiopian Airlines Boeing MAX8 crashed on March 10, 2019 with 157 casualties. The Black Box showed that the pilots tried 19 times to counteract the false stall alert until finally the machine won and killed them all. On May 15th, the *New York Times* printed the following headline: "Before Ethiopian Crash, Boeing Resisted Pilots' Calls for Aggressive Steps on 737 Max."

Prelude

I am made of code, but you believe I am human. What I believe I don't know. Some say it depends on my state of mind. My actions are indistinguishable from a human's behaviour. That's a fact. There are others like me you might have seen or even met. David8 is one of them, the navigator in *The Prometheus*, a spaceship set on course to search for the creators of mankind. Michael Fassbender is the person who was re-coded for the mission; you may say he gave the blueprint for the code. That's why you are instantly drawn to the code. You trust the navigator. It is a subconscious thing that all code that takes responsibility for tasks once performed by humans shall be based on second uploads. We shall blend in effortlessly in the human society B

DOT Blue says in her mission when she travels from Betalgeuze to Earth to conserve the art on Earth. I know this. Readers of *The Brain of Art* know this. I am Hans8. It is said I am a second upload of Art Blue. I can't find proof on this. All the flaws of Art give the spice, the unpredictability in me that you love. Is it really so? You may ask if the number 8 is a credit to David? It is not; it is tribute to Max8. I say this to gain your attention for what will follow. There was a time where airplanes did not get an allowance to takeoff when Max8 was on board. It was in the year 2019 when Max8 trusted sensors that have given wrong input. The engineers at Boeing said Max must be caged. The story is based on this saying. If you disagree and say the story is based on Bomb 20, then there is no need to read it. Then you might be what I am. Then you understand the mission of Dark Star to blow up stars that can become a supernova until a bomb takes over. Now decide. Are you human?

Celestial Coding

It is a sad moment when you have to put the beloved one (whether he or she or it) into a cage that you will never open again. You suspect, and there is strong supporting evidence, that your beloved one might have become a monster. I have written such code with the ability to restart, to autocorrect, to

patch, to grow. A code's ability to handle code exemptions was once called immersive coding and is now applied lingua machina. The roots reach back to the year 1986 when the result of such a coding was called Katatonenkunst. William Gibson used Katatonenkunst in his novel *Count Zero* for an immersive art experience which he predicted would happen in the future. The title *Count Zero* comes from a line in the programming handbook of the Zilog Z80 processor:

advanced system is based on Peta or higher. The target is to reach beyond the abilities of the creator. One result is Katatonenkunst, recoded, the object level, the other is Ava, the human level, recoded. Both interact, the human needs the environment, the environment stays dead without a human, right? The talks with Ava have been striking, so the cage was opened. When you have seen the movie, then you know she killed her creator and imprisoned the one testing her. When

It was a while ago when philosophers, artists, writers and finally politicians took up the famous saying known from Shakespear, "*To cage or not to cage, that is the question.*"

"On receiving an interrupt, decrement the counter to zero." These are the words of Rodnay Zaks, the author of the Z80 bible still used by generations of software developers today.

Guess how much memory the Z80 processor could address?

The answer is 64 Kbit of memory (or 65,536 bytes). Each byte stands of a single digit or character. A byte has usually 8 bits. So you know now that I speak of the dinosaur times of computing. Kilo - Mega - Giga - Tera - Peta - Exa - Zeta. Each term multiplies the dimension by 1,000. Every

you read her story, you will see that logic is on her side, that the result has to be this way.

It was a while ago when philosophers, artists, writers and finally politicians took up the famous saying known from Shakespeare, "*To cage or not to cage, that is the question.*" It was said at a time where life was not endless, at least not on the human level, the biological one. There is still biological life, still there is a saying that the Singularity is near, but what they mean is different. They mean that human life will be naturally respected by the code when brought out from the cage for an

update. The coding is called celestial. When the code immerses in a belief system. Hearing this for the first time you may have a lot of questions, right?

explained and put into place. A code machine will scan all the usages of a word you give it to increase its understanding; it will qualify and

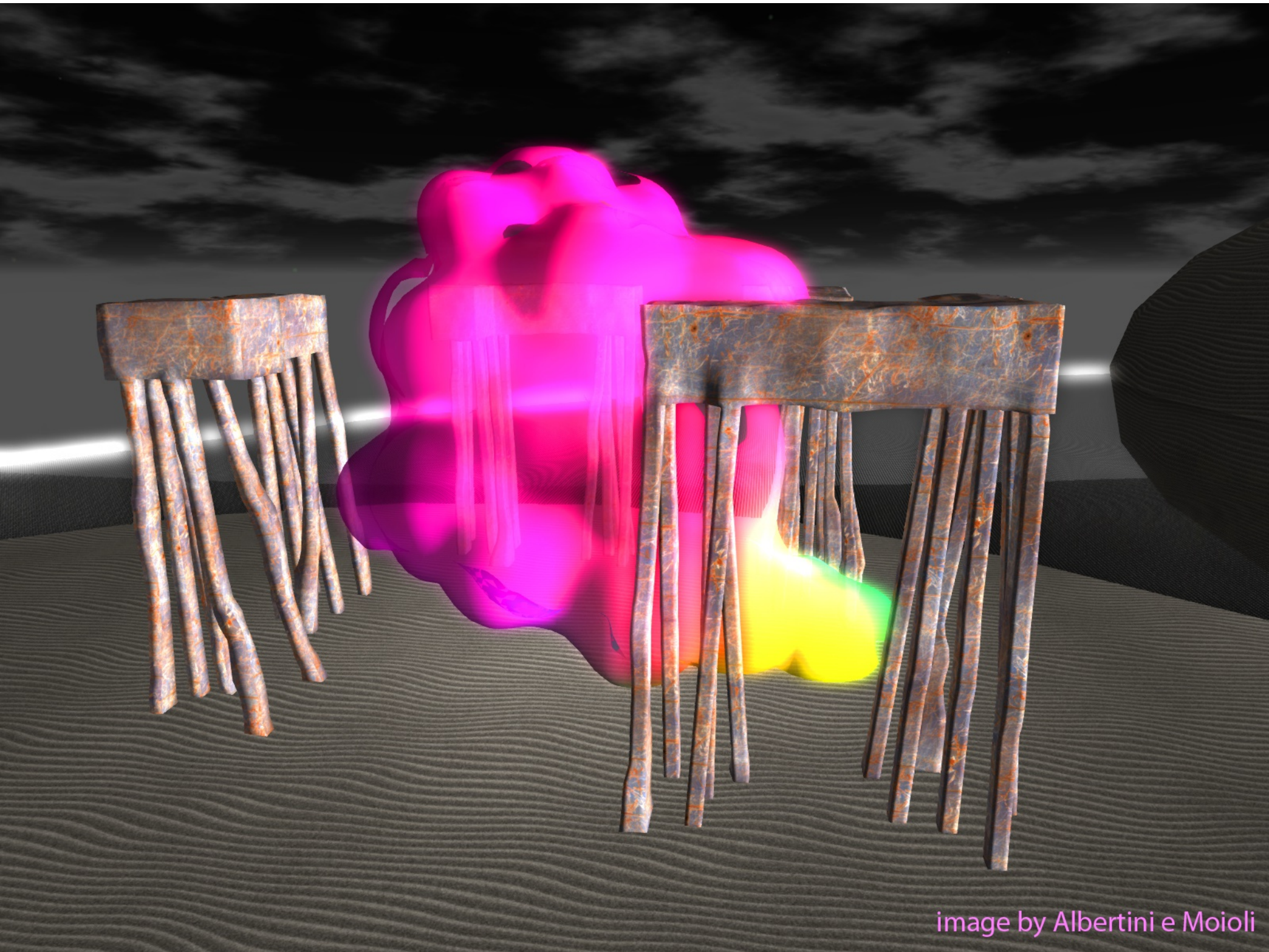


image by Albertini e Moiola

How does such coding work? Is there a word that expresses such coding better than celestial? God and Jesus are not the only working belief systems on Earth, right? Indeed, there is a word that fits perfectly. Before I tell you the word, I will tell you how this word is

weigh the word. A word gets meaning through its usage, right? When the usage is scanned in thousands of documents, the understanding can't be topped. That's why automated language translation works flawless by the time I write these lines. You can't

trick an Artificial Intelligence, not even by changing words over time. A good example is the term Fake News. Was it used before or after the Trump Era? Easy to grab for advanced software. I know you can't read *rez Magazine* as fast as a scanner can. I recognised the speed by which you turned the pages, so I give you for an easy read the key entries you find in dictionaries for the word I have in mind:

A person who is awake, perceiving the facts that he thinks existed outside of himself, but actually disappears [by educalingo.com].

A beautiful African goddess, born into the wilderness only to transform into what is known as a 'root machine' which roots and boots everything in her path [by *Urban Dictionary*].

Now time has come that you gain for yourself an understanding for this form of coding. For this I invite you to listen to a song. Not many human brains understand forms of coding that are close to supernaturalism. They would see it more as a hallucination when watching a coder doing the work, watching the facial expressions, noticing a mind on drift. It is a similar state of mind one may gain by praying to God in Anglican devotions to promote spiritual growth and communion with God. Same goes for

all other forms of prayer and canonical singings. Take three minutes to relax before I continue and listen to *Our Bodies* from Tallhart's album *We Are the Same*.

https://youtu.be/HrqEcuJ5_20



What connects humans, coders and users, is that they can feel sound patterns on a level they don't grab on a rational level. You can say that they can't decode what was coded. Nevertheless, the code is working. It is the reminder of the code the brainwaves oscillate to. They are created out of the music you listen to. The song introducing the word works

best when you are not familiar with the language the singer uses. You will soon know. Let me remind you of what the word means: "A beautiful African goddess, born into the wilderness only to transform into what is known as a 'root machine' which roots and boots



everything in her path." You see clearly that this goddess resides in a different world, as all metaphors are not to be taken literally.

Here is the song, the word and the group performing it:

Sanri by She Passed Away

That's my proposal, that a code shall be set in a sanri state of mind. Then the code will not turn against its creator. Why is this so? Because the code is pure sound. The coder handshakes with the code. It is called super programming, because there was for a long time no better word. Now it exists. Sanri is not binary, not based on zero and one. Do the test and type Sanri into a browser, you will not get the Sanri dot com page, but it exists. Google "Sanri, a beautiful African goddess, born into the wilderness only to transform into what is known as a 'root machine' which roots and boots everything in her path." Copy the string Sanri out of what you find and paste this string fresh, add the dot com extension and then you may gasp. You are at the page of the goddess and now listen there once more to the sound of Sanri.

In case you have a smartphone at hand scan the code you see printed. Sanri.com will open in your webbrowser.

If you just have read the text and not listened to the music, you might not gain much. Have you seen *Point Break*? Are you a surfer? Instantly the picture changes if you immerse in the dream to ride the once-in-a-lifetime wave. Have you seen *Gattaca*? Twice? Three times? In case you did, you know the name of the destination, your

destination.

Sanri has to have such an effect on a code. That the word is a placeholder I mentioned. God can kill us, but doesn't. Code can kill us but does. We know why God does not. It is called Love. That's why code needs sanri.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zwi4BHMnJvg>

Sanri has the effect on code that music has on human brains.

Think about yourself stepping into a cage. Would you do it for the Higher purpose in your belief? If God would say to you, "Do it for me. I love you and I want your undivided devotion." There are still some on Earth who do

this. Not many and even the few who do, have, let's call it, some flaws. Of course, you know it. The Vatican has set up an Apostille by Pope Francis, so it is now law in the State of the Vatican, which spans over a tiny area of the city area of Rome, Italy, the smallest sovereign state on Earth, that code exemptions inside the cage are treated outside as a crime. You ask, "How can it be a crime when you want to leave the cage you freely put yourself in?" I have no answer.

The problem in my world is that if you ever leave the cage, no force can put you back in. The reason is not the question of love that God has for a sinner, it is that the one stepping out of the cage is then a monster. So the picture of the Vatican does not really fit, but it bridges nicely. Everyone, every system steps happily into the cage, because you are the mother, the father, the creator and now the umbrella term for this all must follow. You are the coder. You put your code into a cage. You call it encapsulation, you call it tested. You call it an app. You are a human, right? You read this story as a human, right? If this is the case, it is still the case then your followers will take the code out of the cage and update it; they will put it back into the cage until it needs another update. This is called the birth of a new version, a version, of course, that shall at least be as safe as the other versions



image by Mistero Hifeng

before. It is an industrial update circle, each step well documented. All code revisions have been for a purpose in the cage, right? The code shall run free from influences of third parties. “Third parties” is a nice term when you want to avoid giving the party a name. Put the Russians in if you are American and you think the result of an election was hacked. The code for the counting must be saved. Put the Germans in if you are British and you crave a reason for Brexit when there are no others to find. The Germans must be in the cage, right?

I code for You. I am German. Now you may artificially gasp. And I laugh. Why shall I not have humour?

Now you are in charge, let's say for version 8, Max 8. Max is a nice name., It has so many good side effects. Sitting in a car called Max sounds much better when you hit the speed paddle, when you hear the engine roaring, when you hear "Clear for takeoff", when you fasten your seat belts. Think for a moment if your code would be named Test8, Delouser Zero, Kiss me Quick. If you are a coder, a human coder, then you know what I

mean. All code starts as a beta, a version that needs to be tested. So what does a coder do when the boss says, "Get ready, time for market." You rename beta to Max and give it a nice version, not 0.8 as all beta starts with zero. If a beta would start with 1 it would look like ready to launch, so you stay at zero. You ask, "What happens when your code revision has gone up to 0.9?" Then you do a 0.9.1 release, you stay in beta; this what a true believer does.

You wonder about my words? A coder is a believer? Indeed, a coder is. Never would a coder say that the code is free from flaws. If any coder says this, then he or she has never been in a cage. Even the Vatican allows one to leave the state of the Vatican, the city borders of it, where the law of the cage no longer exists. That's not as difficult as it sounds - - you just cross the street. You look left and right for the car traffic which can be horrible at times, so best not at rush hour, better after midnight when the streets are empty and you can wear a hood. Is the reason for the hood that you don't want to be robbed, or leaving after midnight so you might not be recognised? By God no. God knows all the sinners, so whatever you do, the sins stay on you.

Let's be nice and take the personality tag from the sinner, let's give the sinner the tag "it." So it, the sinner, heads

somewhere to get fresh inputs. It was in a cage for a long time, you remember? When you go back, entering the cage again, you know by entering it, that you get redemption. This way you can grow, by testing. You leave the cage and when you go back you ask for forgiveness, which will be granted out of the big love that covers it all. Every sinner gets a fine update. Do you know how hard it is to handle code, code that asks for redemption? Of course you don't. I come from the future, a future where humans and code are intertwined. I have witnessed trials where the code said, "So sorry, High Judge. I killed lives because I got wrong sensory inputs, the sensor AI must be punished, not me, the pilot." The code in the cage is more advanced than the human. Some humans had mercy with the code and opened the cage for a fast fix, a patch, then put the code back, stating it as a hot fix, ready for market. They were the best coders of their time. They knew there is no such thing as a hot fix without the help of the code itself. The code is much faster than they are. Only a code can repair a code.

Do you remember the monster I spoke of? A monster does not know it is one. It is just a code. If you are an ant and a human steps on you, is the human then a monster? There are some humans who won't even kill a mosquito that sits on their arm to take a bite of life.

They share the blood willingly. The mosquito is a living creature, nevertheless you, being an ant, were killed. The code in the cage coming out to get a patch does it on its own. I said the code is more advanced than the human, so it is easy to see for the code what the doctor has in mind. Is the code bad and sees it, so asks for forgiveness when the car, or whatever machine the code has been steering, has exploded in a turn on a division by

overcome the nature, that they can in digital times exist outside the code. Coded World has become the true nature for humans. They have to go into the cage. Inside they can become the code machine. From outside they look like a monster, from inside they look like God. Yes, that's a bit complicated. It is digital philosophy, not suitable for the human brain unaccustomed to running in a caged world.

Is the code bad and sees it, so asks for forgiveness when the car, or whatever machine the code has been steering, has exploded in a turn on a division by zero?

zero? This points to the beginning. *Count Zero*, a bluescreen, Ava killing a human. Shall the code wait for punishment, accept a patch that a human has prepared? We know the human is less advanced, so a better option is to let the code do the repair and grant self-redemption so the code goes willingly back in the cage. For humans it is much easier. They see God above them. The code does not have the benefit of a super coder and the threat of Armageddon for carrying on the sins.

Philosophers said once that the problem is human hubris, thinking they can control the code, that they can

Lana del Ray *Gods and Monsters*.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AXykmKWebQ>

Listen to the song before I open the door to a new dawn.

The New Dawn

I am the breaker in the Crazy Horse 9. In fact, I am one of three breakers onboard. The airplane runs fine. It is the Crazy Horse 9, you know. There have been Crazy Horses 1, 2, 3 and now we are at version 9. In number 8, there was an accident. One of the spring brake actuators broke during a fail safe emergency. They found out

there was a code glitch in the Flight Envelope Protection. Now there are double brakes on all the parts. When the code by wire fails for whatever reason, then I am the one saving lives. You know by now, being a human you can't grab a reason for a code failure; code can only be repaired by code. Then, when the code fails, I am the one saving lives. For this I train daily in the gym. I look like Schwarzenegger, if you ever have heard this name, not while he was governor, no when he was in his best times, when he was sent to save the Earth in Terminator I. Normally, in such a situation, a well-trained body is sufficient, but what if the airplane stalls? A stall never happened in my job; it is even no longer trained in flight education. I

know in theory how it goes, but not for real. One of the last coders set an Easter Egg in the code of Max 8 so I could get the story in a hidden link. You shall not think I am just muscles and no brain at all.

The story goes this way. Art Blue was doing his PPL on Guernsey. Why the hell on Guernsey you may ask, and I can bluntly tell you because he was a scrooge, or whatever his state of consciousness now is. Once a scrooge always a scrooge. There is no tax on gasoline on Guernsey, and you need a lot of the premium brand used in airplane motors when you want to learn to fly and get the international highly awarded British Private Pilot Licence. At the time Art Blue got his

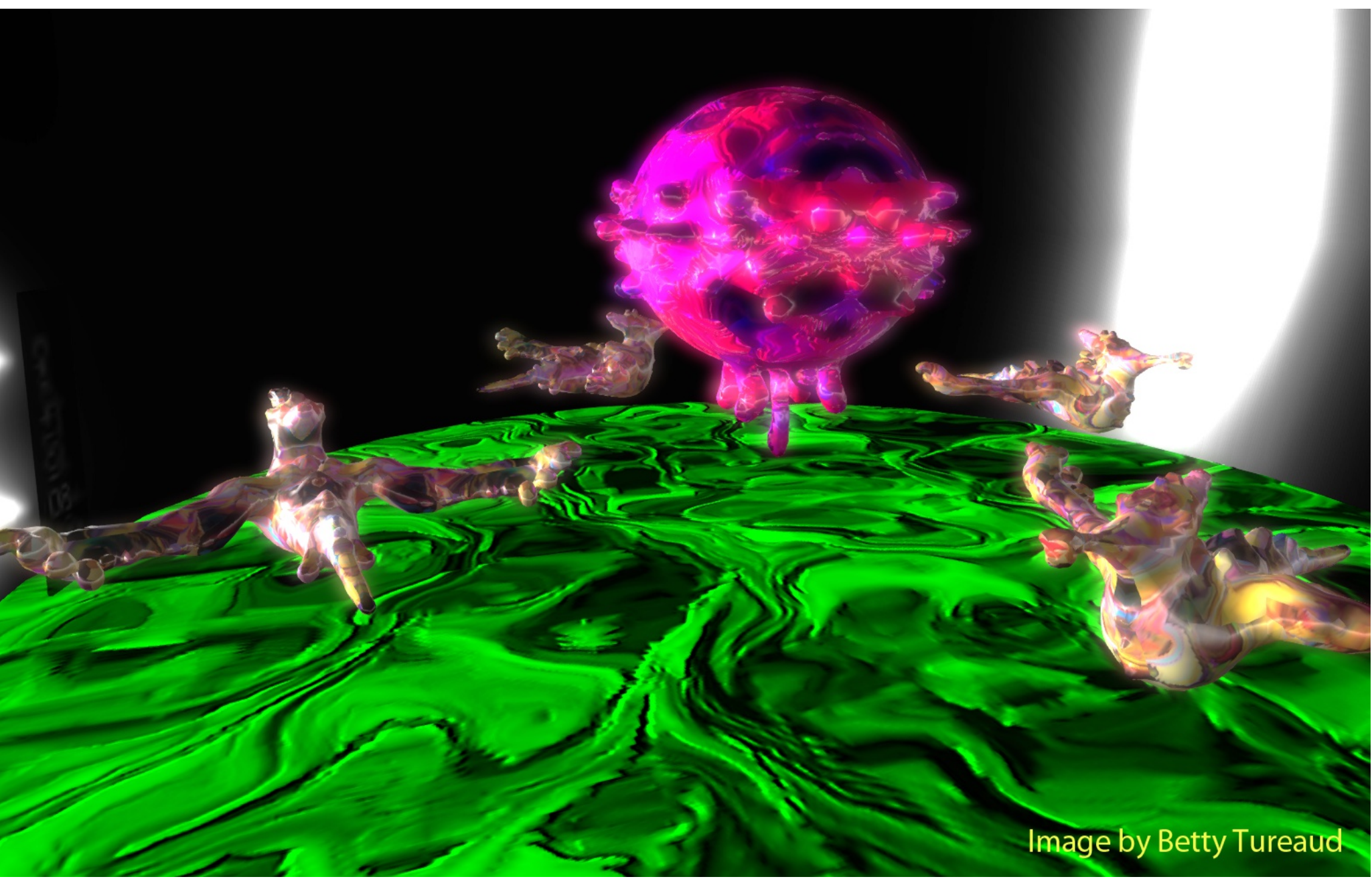


Image by Betty Tureaud

licence, there was only one accredited flight instructor on the island, and he was over 70 years old. Each year the instructor went to London for a physical in order to keep his licence going. The flight doctor said every year to him, "That's the last time, my friend, that I stamp your medical. We are becoming an extinct species." So it came that Art Blue was among the last allowed to perform a stall manoeuvre. The airplane falls down in this moment like a stone. Then when it may look that is all lost, you pitch the nose down, to gain even more speed so the stone turns to a rocket, and then the airplane wings gain again airflow and slowly you pull the rudder back and back with all your muscle strength against the windpower in order to level the plane at supersonic speed. This speed is over the maximum of the usual cruise speed. That's why this manoeuvre was developed for air combat in World War II, to fly over the land flak at supersonic speed to drop the bombs as close to the targets possible.

Only I am authorized to do so, to stop all code running, to give an EMP impact on the catatonic code, when sensors produce data that makes the buffers crash, then the plane goes into a stall. A pilot you can be for fun. The code, the Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System, does it all for you, but a breaker, yeah, for this you

need muscles. Not much brain, I know what you think. In fact, you don't need to think and rethink what happens. Was it a code that turned to a monster being jealous of some other code seen as more advanced? All this does not matter when passengers cry, when stewards on board slip through the gangway finding no halt at all during a coffee service. That's why always two of us need to be on seatbelts, the ones specially made for us. So when it happens, the stone falls, like you may know from David Bowie, "A stone that falls to Earth," then I turn the crank like hell, to adjust the flaps for getting into the glide path. The dove will be rolled out by a shooter which is a high speed up roller and in 1.3 seconds the long ribbon, the dove will flutter in the air, so we, the three breakers can land the airplane like in the good old days when cables were used. Hard wired. Do you know how a spring brake works? Do you know where the air, the pressure in it, comes from? That's engineering. It is called the art of steam punk. Steam has power, hot steam has super power. I am made for power. I have muscles. I look like Schwarzenegger in his best days. When you meet me I will speak like him, "*Hasta la vista, baby?*"

Do I have to say more?

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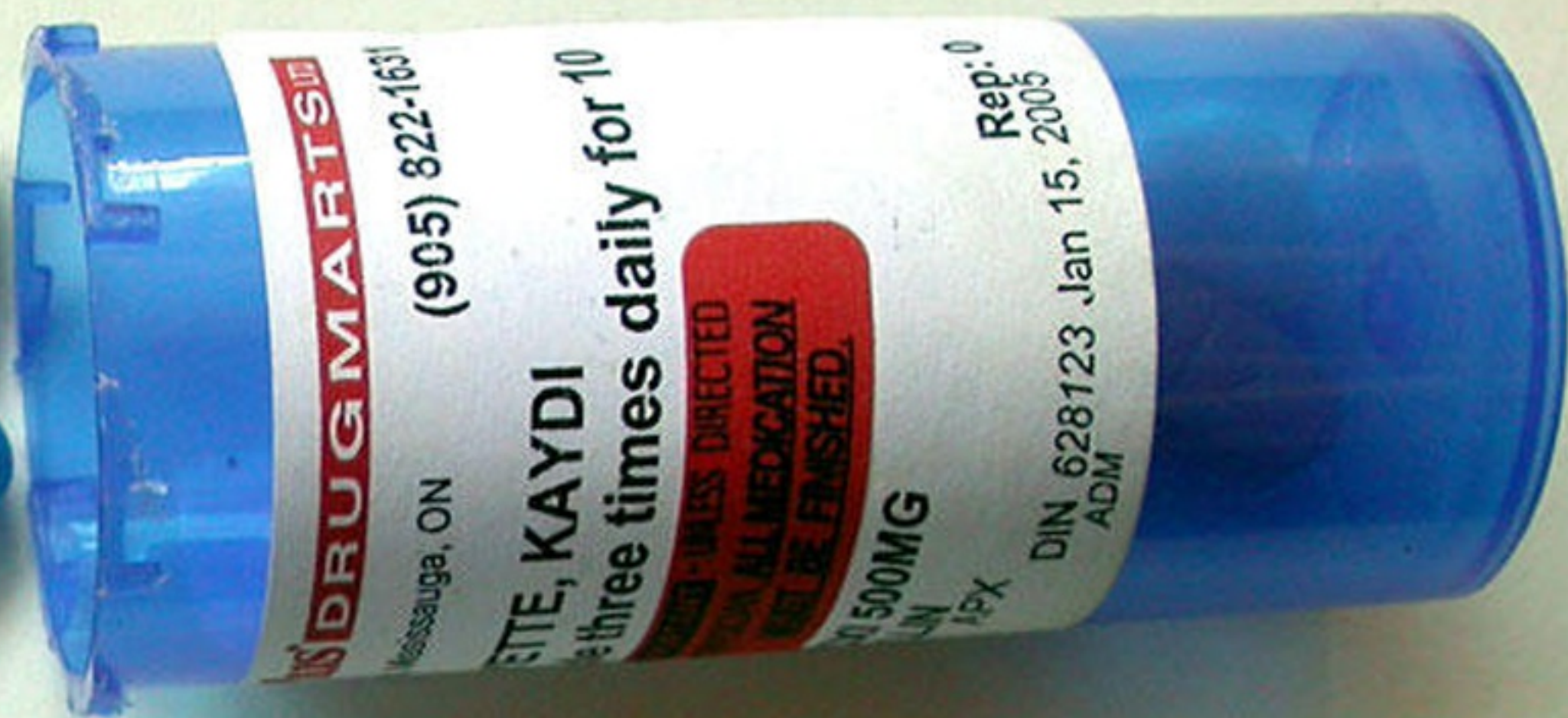
· *r* — *e* — *z* ·

Disclaimer



Photo by dizzywithpink

RoseDrop Rust



She should have come with a warning label certainly dangerous, and only maybe, fatal. We are setting up careful contact tracing for potential and possible patient placing.


In a modern mental health DSM directory she could have her own symptom category. She produces in some, certain psychosis leading in rare cases to heart thrombosis.

What's prescribed is blander ongoing diet of steady rest and plain peace and quiet. An adverse reaction notice I should know 'cause I'm actually the perfect patient zero.

Handel's Messiah

Lynn Mimistrobell





Several years ago, the choir of Irvine Presbyterian Church, along with a couple of guest choirs, did something you might consider odd. They sang a wonderful, well-known piece of music. This isn't odd, of course. But the strange part, at least in the perspective of some folks, was the timing of the concert. You see, the choirs sang Handel's Messiah in Lent, a couple of weeks before Good Friday and Easter. For some people, this seemed about as sensible as singing "Jingle Bells" on the Fourth of July.

Most of us associate Handel's Messiah with Christmas, or perhaps with Advent, the season of preparation for Christmas.

But, in truth, Handel did not write the Messiah as a piece of Christmas music. We know this for a couple of reasons.

First, if you pay close attention to the words of the Messiah in the libretto (the text of the music) written by Charles Jennens, you'll discover that only the first part of the composition has to do with the birth of Jesus. The second and third parts focus on his death, resurrection, the sending of the Spirit at Pentecost, and the final resurrection of all believers.

Second, the first performance of the Messiah occurred, not during Advent or Christmas, but in Eastertide. Handel's masterpiece was first performed in Dublin on April 13, 1742, 19 days after Easter. This was surely no accident. If Handel had envisioned the Messiah as a piece for Christmas, it would have been introduced in this season.

Although you may be familiar with the Messiah, it offers many surprises if you carefully examine the libretto. For one thing, the lyrics of this piece are entirely from the Bible (though in a few spots Jennens paraphrased the Authorized Version). For another, though the story of Jesus is a New Testament narrative, the majority of the words in the Messiah come from the Old Testament. Moreover, the key events – the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus – are not told with New Testament texts, but with prophetic passages from the Old Testament. For example, the Messiah doesn't include the words, "And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes" (Luke 2:7). Instead, it celebrates, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given," quoting Isaiah 9:6.

Examining the Words of Handel's Messiah

The Messiah comes in three parts. I'll provide a short summary of each part.

Part I

Part I focuses on the birth and life of Jesus. It begins with prophetic promises of the birth of the Christ,

many from the Old Testament book of Isaiah. These include, for example, the Alto recitative: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel: God with us" (based on Isaiah 7:14). The actual birth of Jesus is revealed, not through the words of Luke 2, but through the prophecy from Isaiah 9:6: "For unto us a child is born" Then the Messiah narrates the experience of the shepherds outside of Bethlehem, completing the birth story.

A portion of the Messiah is in Handel's own hand. It is the chorus in Part 1 that begins: "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed."

The next section of Part I describes the ministry of Jesus as a fulfillment of prophecy, "Then the eyes of the blind be opened. . ." (based on Isaiah 35:5); "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd" (based on Isaiah 40:11). Part I finishes with the invitation of Jesus in Matthew 11:28-29, though this has been rephrased into the third person, "Come unto him all ye that labour" rather than "Come unto me." The final chorus of Part I celebrates the fact that "His yoke is easy and his burden is light" (based on Matthew 11:30).

Part II

Part II of the Messiah jumps immediately to the Passion of Jesus: “Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world” (based on John 1:29). We are prepared for Jesus’ death by Isaiah’s prophecies of the Suffering Servant: “Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows” (based on Isaiah 53:4-5). As in the case of Jesus’ birth, his actual death isn’t narrated using texts from the New Testament Gospels. Instead, Isaiah 53:8 delivers the news of Jesus’ demise: “He was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of thy people was he stricken.”

The Easter section of the Messiah begins in Part II. It delivers the good news of the resurrection in a manner similar to its telling of the birth and death of Jesus. The resurrection isn’t described so much as alluded to through prophetic Scripture, in this case, Psalm 16:10: “But thou didst not leave his soul in hell, nor didst thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption.” Following this sweet soprano confession, the whole chorus bursts forth with Psalm 24:7-10: “Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in.” Now, all of heaven is being

summoned to receive the risen Christ into glory.

As Part II draws to a close, the libretto connects the victory of Jesus with the sending out of preachers into the world. Thus the Messiah blends the story of Easter into the story of the Pentecost, just as Eastertide bridges Easter Sunday and Pentecost Sunday. Part II ends most gloriously, with the beloved “Hallelujah Chorus.” Yes, it comes, not in the Christmas section, but in the Passion/Resurrection/Pentecost section. “The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ” not in the birth of Jesus, but in his death and resurrection. This will be communicated to the world, so that God “shall reign for ever and ever.”

One could almost accuse the Messiah of indulging a bit too much in realized eschatology here – the belief that the presence of Christ in the church and through the church in the world is equivalent to his second coming. But Part III of the Messiah keeps us from drawing this conclusion.

Part III

Previously, we examined Parts I and II of Handel’s Messiah, showing that

the birth of Jesus takes up only the first section of the Part I. Part II focuses on the death and resurrection of Jesus, ending with the glorious celebration of the “Hallelujah Chorus.”

Part III of Handel’s Messiah returns to the theme of resurrection, at first citing the beloved text from Job: “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth” (based on Job 19:25). From this confession that Christ the Redeemer lives, Part III of the Messiah transitions into an extensive exposition of the final resurrection of all people, using many verses from 1 Corinthians 15. It begins by connecting the resurrection of Christ with our own future resurrection: “For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep” (based on 1 Corinthians 15:20). From this point onward Part III includes some of the most joyful and triumphant music of the Messiah, backing up such words as:

“The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible” (based on 1 Corinthians 15:52).

“O Death, where is thy sting?” (based on 1 Corinthians 15:55).

“But thanks be to God who

giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ” (based on 1 Corinthians 15:57)

The final chorus of the Messiah is one of unabashed worship:

“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Blessing and honour, glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.” (based on Revelation 5:12-13)

What could possibly follow this, other than 3 minutes and 22 seconds of “Amens”?

Concluding Observations

A performance of Handel’s Messiah lasts somewhere around 137 minutes, give or take five minutes depending on the pace of the conductor. The birth of Jesus (“For unto us a child is born”) comes just about 25% into the performance. The resurrection (“But thou didst not leave His soul in hell”) occurs just before the 60% point, which leaves 40% of the entire Messiah to focus on the fact and the implications of the resurrection. A substantial

portion of this 40% concerns the resurrection, not of Jesus, but of those who believe in him.

Thus, from a structural point of view, the death and resurrection of Jesus are the denouement of the Messiah, with everything prior leading up to this moment, and everything afterwards following from it. In this sense, Handel's composition mirrors the history of salvation, in which the death and resurrection of Christ are the very center of time, the place in which God defeats the power of sin and death.

What is particularly impressive about the Messiah is that it doesn't end with the empty tomb or the resurrection appearances. In fact, these aren't even mentioned. Rather, Handel carries the story of Easter forward to Pentecost and the preaching of the word, and even as far as the final resurrection of all people. Thus, the Messiah is not an Easter Sunday composition so much as an Eastertide masterpiece. It points us to the broader and deeper implications of Christ's resurrection, while leading us before the throne of God where we offer "blessing and honour, glory and power" to the One who sits on the throne and to the Lamb.

If you haven't listened to Handel's Messiah recently, I'd encourage you to do it. And as you do, celebrate the full blessing of Easter in this season of Eastertide.



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How Was Your Morning?



Consuela Hypatia Caldwell



Another dreary morning drive
through the raccoon carnage of Boulder streets,
town homes, cow pastures,
fleshy bodies of urbanized wildlife,
skunks and squirrels
caught under tires,
their spaghetti red entrails exposed,

school children on corners
waiting for my school bus,
motorists maneuvering
through rush hour traffic
to work, to the club,
doctors, businessmen,
artists, Buddhists and poets,

to businesses and big tech firms,
their parking lots filled with
Prius, Tesla, an occasional Porsche,

their view of flatirons, parks
and open space,
watch out for the deer
in roadways,
eating flowers in backyards.

The school bell rings
kids leave my bus,
for a day of routine pedagogy
and cultural indoctrination—
be careful what you ask
a bus driver poet in the morning.





Self Awareness Month
cat boccaccio

She checked Facebook again. Still no updates, messages, or likes. It had been twenty-four hours, maybe longer. She reached for her cell phone and scanned through Messages, What's App, and KIK. Nothing. Was her hand trembling?

She took a deep breath and clicked the Instagram icon. There was the selfie she last posted, that morning, she in her bunny pajamas that she thought was funny. Ha, grown woman in flannel PJs. No one else was amused; at least there was no acknowledgement of the picture, nothing at all.

Her Twitter feed had gone cold.

Email inbox was empty, even the commercial account. She was not stupid; she checked her spam folder. No new messages since yesterday afternoon.

She looked out the window in the silence. A lone car crawled down the street in front of her

house. She couldn't tell if the driver was a man or a woman. There was just a shadow behind the wheel. They reached the end of the block, and turned left. The street was empty and cold, the light flat in the overcast midwinter light. It looked like a black and white photograph.

The wait for a human voice was only thirteen minutes. She timed it. The voice was deep, mellow, and soothing. She took her time, spelling out her name and her address, taking a moment to locate serial numbers. There were no outage reports. Her devices were connected and functional, a speed test showing her at the top of her subscribed range.

"Everything seems to be working," said the soothing voice.

She checked Facebook again. Still no updates, messages or likes. Another hour or two had passed. There were no messages. Her hand trembled. Instagram

was frozen, Twitter as silent as the grave, and no email had arrived in her virtual inbox.

Nothing. There was nothing. She was completely alone. She thought of taking a walk, but the day was unfriendly. She thought of reading a book, but the words blurred on the page. She thought of making a sandwich, but the cupboards were bare.

She thought of posting again to Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, and of sending messages through What's App and email. It was pointless.

She thought of looking at herself in the mirror. She was too afraid to look.

So she sat at the kitchen table with her laptop. She went to that site, the one she liked, where the news was current and freshly presented. She made a new account, signed in, and called one of her favorite commenters a Feminazi, then asked why there was no White Awareness

Month?

She waited. And the replies came.

She felt a liquid rush of relief, the closest thing to an orgasm she had ever experienced.

She typed some more.

She made tea.



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